

Kathleen Johnson

SENATE NATURAL RESOURCES

EXHIBIT NO. 12

DATE Feb 16, 2009

BILL NO. SJ 21

February 16, 2009

RE: GALTON STUDY RESOLUTION - SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 21

Dear Senate Natural Resources Committee,

ok I am a concerned citizen in Lincoln County regarding the Galton Study Project.

ok I also responded to the Forest Service solicitation for public input and learned that our suggestions for the Galton to be managed for a "national recreation area" were definitely not an option. It has become apparent that the Forest Service has an agenda and a goal of their own.

Murphy Lake District ^{Ranger} Betty Holder claimed the study is not about wilderness, yet we know that 81,000 acres of the area has already been designated a wilderness study area and been managed as a de facto wilderness since 1977.

ok When observers verified that, the boundaries of the Galton Study Area coincidentally appear to conform to the 171,000-acre "Winton Weydemeyer Wilderness," long a priority of the Montana Wilderness Association, concern has grown to alarm. Our family was a close friend and neighbor of Winton Weyemeyer, and his parents before him, and we never once heard him advocate wilderness designation for what have been a workplace, playground and backyard shared by us all. During most of those years, the area was limited to the original six and ½ thousand Ten Lakes Scenic Area.

ok Even more cause for concern surfaces as forty-two thousand nine hundred and five acres of the 170,285 acre Galton Study Area is private land—much of it homesteaded by early settlers of Lincoln County who have passed that heritage on to us. Much of the water, which brings life to the Tobacco Valley, rises in that water shed. In a county over 75% state and federally owned, 42,905 acres is a huge component of the county's tax base.

By far the greatest geographical area of the Galton does not meet either wilderness or inventoried roadless requirements. It has been roaded to provide access for logging operations, protection from insect infestations, fire management and access during my lifetime ^{the life time of my father} for all types of recreation ^{and the life time of his father before him.} fishing, berrying ^{horse back riding} snowmobiling, camping and even cave exploration. ^{more recently}

OK
I agree with the committee commissioned by the Eureka Chamber of Commerce and the Tobacco Valley Community Development Council to study Kootenai Forest issues who concluded that: "in all areas, we endorse active over passive management of the Kootenai National Forest" and that currently we do not have a healthy forest. A short while ago over 1600 signatures were gathered on petitions advocating access and better management to be presented to members of our Congressional Delegation who have to date not responded in a meaningful way.

OK
Senate Joint Resolution 21 is one more effort to petition high level policy makers to implement the will of Congress as to multiple uses, as well as the will of Congress expressed in the Americans with Disabilities Act by maintaining open road systems with at least one loop road, in each drainage to assure that the disabled are able to enjoy the beauty and use of the Kootenai National Forest. It calls on the Forest Service to impose and follow management practices which allow open public access for enjoyment of these public lands, to protect this important watershed from catastrophic fire, and enhance the qualities of the area through policies that allow access that will allow for overflow of visitors to Glacier National Park.

Thank you for hearing my agreement of this testimony,

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*Board Member Lincoln Co. Natural Resource Council
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